



USAID | LIBERIA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SOLICITATION NO: SOL-669-14-000010
ISSUANCE DATE: July 18, 2014
CLOSING DATE: August 18, 2014, 4:00 pm
LOCAL TIME

**SUBJECT: Solicitation for Personal Service Contractor (PSC) for
Senior Development Outreach and Communications Specialist
(DOC), USAID/Liberia**

To All Interested Applicants

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking applications (Optional Form 612) from qualified United States (US) citizens or U.S. Permanent Residents (non-U.S. citizen lawfully admitted for permanent residency) to provide services as a Senior Development Outreach and Communications Specialist (DOC) under a Personal Services Contract, as described in the attached solicitation. The place of performance for this position is Monrovia, Liberia.

Submissions to this solicitation shall be in accordance with the attached information, at the place and time specified. Email submissions shall be sent to Monrovia_HR@usaid.gov and sbrowne@usaid.gov. Incomplete, unsigned or late applications will not be considered.

Applicants should retain for their records copies of all enclosures which accompany their applications. Applications received after the closing date and time contained in this solicitation will be considered late and will not be considered. USAID/Liberia will not consider an extension to the submission deadline for this procurement.

Any questions or comments regarding this solicitation should be in writing and directed to Monrovia_HR@usaid.gov and sbrowne@usaid.gov. Applicant should retain for their record copies of all enclosures which accompany their applications.

Phone calls or e-mail to any address other than the one specified in this solicitation will not be accepted.

Sincerely,

Phillip M. Cherry
Supervisory Executive Officer
USAID/Liberia

ATTACHMENT 1: SOLICITATION

SOLICITATION NO.: SOL-669-14-000010

ISSUANCE DATE: July 18, 2014

CLOSING DATE/TIME: August 18, 2014, 4:00 pm Local Time

POSITION TITLE: Senior Development Outreach and Communications Specialist (DOC)

MARKET VALUE: GS-13 equivalent with a base annual salary range of \$72,391 to \$94,108. This does not include cost of living allowance (COLA), post differential or other allowances. Liberia currently provides a 30% COLA and 30% post differential in addition to base salary.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: The contract will be for two years, with three renewable one-year option periods up to a maximum of five years.

PLACE OF PERFORMANCE: USAID/Liberia, Monrovia, Liberia

AREA OF CONSIDERATION: United States (US) citizens or U.S. Permanent Residents (non-U.S. citizen lawfully admitted for permanent residency)

SUPERVISORY CONTROL: Minimal. Incumbent is expected to act independently with little direction.

POSITION TITLE OF DIRECT SUPERVISOR: The Contractor will report to the Supervisory Program Officer

PHYSICAL & SECURITY CLEARANCE: The selected candidate must be able to obtain required medical and security clearances prior to the execution of the contract.

I. POSITION DESCRIPTION

A. BACKGROUND

A decade after its brutal civil war, Liberia is at peace and is transitioning from recovery to development. The first freely elected woman head of state in Africa, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, was re-elected for a second term in November 2011. The President's reform-oriented administration supports a broad set of policies aimed at accelerating economic growth, developing human capacity, and building strong systems of governance. As a result, the economy is expanding rapidly with an annual growth rate of 6.9% in 2011, and although infrastructure is still very fragile, roads and facilities are being rebuilt, health clinics and schools are re-opening and

agricultural production is increasing. Despite the progress being made, Liberia is still near the bottom of the rankings on almost all comparative measures of development. Corruption is rampant; instances of violence are still reported; illiteracy rates remain high; the justice sector is weak and ineffective; and the maternal mortality ratio is among the highest in the world.

With a country budget averaging approximately \$150 million per year, USAID is the largest bilateral donor in the country and maintains close relationships with a range of Government of Liberia (GOL) counterparts. Its development program focuses resources in four technical areas: Democracy and Governance, Economic Growth, Health, and Education. USAID/Liberia spearheads several USAID initiatives: Feed-the-Future (FtF), the Global Health Initiative, and the President's Malaria Initiative. The Mission is at the forefront of USAID/Forward, an ambitious reform effort aimed at changing the way the Agency does business by focusing on the strengthening of host country systems and, where appropriate, using those systems to implement USAID-funded development programs.

USAID works closely with the interagency team at the U.S. Embassy and is a critical component to our work in Liberia.

B. DETAILED DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The DOC will manage the full range of public information and outreach activities in support of USAID/Liberia's programs and objectives, targeting information to specific audiences in both Liberia and the US, in accordance with the Mission's public strategy and evolving circumstances.

Specific duties include but are not limited to the following:

Supervisory and Coordination

- Lead the Mission's DOC team comprised of one FSN to ensure overall quality and coherence of the team's communications and outreach products and initiatives.
- Lead the development and implementation of the Mission's communications strategy and outreach plan.
- Represent the Mission at the senior level in all matters pertaining to public affairs and outreach activities with other branches of the USG, the Government of Liberia, implementing partners, other donor nations, the UN, World Bank and other donors and stakeholders.
- Train USAID's technical staff in Monrovia in support of their public speaking and media outreach roles. Oversee the integration of communications in the project design and implementation processes.

- Serve as the senior advisor to Mission management regarding all public information, media relations, and outreach matters.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of all USAID/Liberia activities and processes, as well as a keen awareness of political and policy issues.
- Advise USAID staff and implementing partners on development appropriate public information programs and initiatives.
- Serve as a resident expert of USAID branding and style guidelines, ensuring regulations are followed by recommending revisions and appropriate application as outlines in ADS 320 and the Agency's Graphic Standards Manual.
- Oversee and provide regular trainings to USAID staff and implementing partners on the appropriate use of branding and marking; work closely with C/AORs to ensure adherence to branding in the field; and, seek guidance from LPA on any disputes or waiver requests.
- Coordinate with PAS, other USG agencies, and USAID implementing partners to achieve maximum exposure and understanding of U.S. development and humanitarian assistance efforts and initiatives in Liberia, as defined by the Chief of Mission and USAID Mission Director.
- Establish and maintain contacts with donor representatives, implementing partners, and other USG agencies to collect information for reports.

Public Information and Publicity Materials

- Coordinate information dissemination, media outreach, and public events within the Mission; with the Mission's offices, units and technical staff.
- Oversee the drafting, editing, and dissemination of timely and accurate information, fact sheets, press releases, newsletters, brochures, presentations, responses for requests for information, and all other public information materials relating to USAID/Liberia's activities. These must be written in clear, concise English, prepared with both the media and general audiences in mind, and designed for print, power points, and web use.
- Oversee the preparation of a bi-weekly summary of events, weekly submissions for "This Too Is Liberia" reporting cable, and submissions for USAID Frontlines and other USAID and State Department information platforms including the Administrator's Blog, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other new or emerging social media sites.
- Oversee the use of social media platforms as an engagement tool with a focus on digital advocacy and outreach; a social media strategy will be development to complement the broader communications plan.
- The DOC will manage the preparation and maintenance of an updated standard information package on the USAID program in Liberia for briefings

and for distribution to the public and media; and for USAID/W, LPA, State Department, Congress, etc.; including scene setters, program briefing papers, project status reports, maps, photos, information about other donors, and general information about Liberia.

- S/He oversees the maintenance of the Mission's web materials to ensure they are accurate and up-to-date.
- Oversee the writing and distribution of press releases on program successes, project inaugurations, significant development, etc. Follow up with media to encourage and support coverage of public events. Coordinate with technical offices, Embassy's PAS, and LPA to produce and release timely, accurate, and useful written information to local and international media.

Media and Public Relations

- Promote separate, pro-active, targeted, information and media outreach activities. These activities are specifically designed to push accurate information about USAID programs deep into local, regional and national markets, through the selective use of radio, newspapers, public service announcements, and other communications methods.
- Oversee all international and local media relations. Work closely with PAS on press relations and maintain contacts with high-level Western and local journalists from all media outlets.
- Advise and work with Embassy PAS to expand opportunities to keep media abreast of USAID/Liberia programs, including TV, radio and other media. This may include arranging interview, briefings, media tours of USAID projects, etc.
- In collaboration with PAS, advise the Mission Director and USAID staff on press and media relations. Ensure a targeted, coherent, and consistent message from all USAID staff and implementing partners.
- Coordinate with Government of Liberia's public relations offices, maintain good relations and advising on work with Liberian and international media.
- Supervise the monitoring of the local and international press coverage, awareness, and attitudes concerning USAID programs and monitor effectiveness of the communications strategy. Provide feedback to inform ongoing activities and future programming.
- As directed by the Mission Director, Deputy Director and in collaboration with PAS, respond to inquiries from the general public, media, and other sources about USAID programs and projects.

Publicity Events

- Organize and coordinate press events for USAID projects in conjunction with the PAS, USAID Mission Director and Deputy Director, technical teams, and

implementing partners. This includes conferences, openings, ribbon-cuttings, and other ceremonies. Write press releases, speeches, and talking points; organize background briefings for media; compile and disseminate press packets; deal with protocol issues, site selection, staging, and logistical issues; identify and schedule speakers; liaise with US and local government officials; write or edit Briefing Checklists (BCLs). Scene setters, briefing materials and memorandums to the Ambassador or her deputies with participation in events is warranted; write or edit BCLs and scene setters for USAID's Front Office when participation in events is warranted; provide on-site coordination of media. Follow up with media to ensure coverage of public events. Manage the posting of all event information and materials to the Mission website.

- Review and edit press releases, speeches, and talking points drafted by implementing partners for USAID events; review and edit BCLs and scene setters drafted by implementing partners for USAID events.
- Submit all press releases and interview requests – in-house and those drafted by implementing partners – to PAS (and LPA, when appropriate) for review and approval.
- Oversee the maintenance of a calendar of USAID program events and its distribution within USAID/Liberia, and to Embassy and USAID/W stakeholders.
- Photograph and/or shoot video of USAID events for the USAID and Embassy websites for USAID/Liberia's archives.
- Serve as the Mission's primary point of contact for publicity events and site visits by official visitors from the US Embassy, USAID/W, Congress, and other USG agencies or entities. Coordinate VIP site visits as necessary. Coordinate with Embassy on schedules and logistics. Lead the preparation of briefing materials, scene setters, and other information products and processes to support these visits. Maintain a diverse list of potential site visit locations appropriate for a variety for CODEL, STAFFDEL, and other high-level visitors to USAID/Liberia, coordinating closely with partners in advance.
- Perform other duties/activities that the US Ambassador, USAID Mission Director and Deputy Director, USAID/W and circumstances may dictate.

C. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Education: It is preferred, but not required, that the candidate hold a Master's degree with significant coursework in relevant fields. Relevant fields include – but are not limited to – journalism, communications, public relations or affairs, international relations, international development, public administration, development/area studies, and social studies. At least eight to 10 years' experience as a journalist, in public affairs or international relations is required.

Work Experience: The candidate must have at least five years' relevant experience in a developing country. Relevant experience is defined as work in journalism, public relations, communications, and/or outreach.

Language Proficiency: The candidate must be fluent in both spoken and written English.

Skills and Abilities: The candidate must have a demonstrated capacity in the following skills and abilities:

- Demonstrated ability to exercise sound, independent, professional judgment.
- Excellent organizational and critical thinking skills.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills with a demonstrated ability to translate highly technical material into easy to understand narrative.
- Exceptional interpersonal skills with the ability to influence relationships positively
- Superior project management skills and the ability to take initiative working with the direction of management; must be able to take ownership of projects, creatively problem solve and see through to completion
- Strong and demonstrated knowledge of the principles and practices of public relations, media relations, and journalistic writing and reporting techniques.
- Knowledge of technical aspects involved in the production of different public outreach activities, such as production of radio programs.
- Maintain superior levels of professionalism while working under pressure in a fast-paced and sometimes difficult environment.
- Willingness to assume duties and responsibilities in all communications areas, as needed.
- Strong, working knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point, and internet applications.
- Familiarity using a digital camera and videotaping equipment.

II. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The contract will be for a base two years, with three subsequent one-year option periods for a total of five-year maximum period.

III. SALARY

This position is classified at the General Schedule Grade 13 equivalent range. The actual salary will depend on past salary history and experience of the successful candidate.

IV. SELECTION CRITERIA AND PROCESS

Applicants who do not meet the required minimum qualifications will be considered unqualified for the position and will not be assessed using the additional selection criteria below.

All other applications will be scored, then ranked based on the following selection criteria:

Technical Knowledge/Work Experience (40 points)

- At least six to eight years' experience in related fields, such as public relations, journalism, or international development communications.
- Experience supervising staff and work flows, working as a team member, and providing leadership in the areas of his/her competencies.
- Demonstrated success in development and disseminating information to a variety of target audiences.
- Demonstrated success in designing and implementing effective public relations/communications campaigns targeted at specific audiences as well as the general public.
- Demonstrated ability to craft information messages in various media formats (press releases, web sites, stories, etc.) targeting a variety of audiences.
- Evidence of broad understanding of issues related to international development.
- Extensive writing and editing experience.
- Demonstrated ability to establish and maintain collegial relations with press and media contacts and exercise sound judgment in representing the USG while discussing program activities with the press and media.
- Broad operational planning experience, analytical ability, and the capacity to convert planning concepts into firm plans to meet a variety of contingencies.
- Previous work experience with the USG or another international development organization in an overseas context is highly desirable.

Communication Skills/Group Dynamics (30 points)

Applicants must provide evidence and examples of:

- Effective team leadership skills and the ability to work effectively as a member of a multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural team.
- Ability to make cogent arguments clearly and succinctly in written and oral presentations.
- Initiative and proactive engagement with colleagues to complete assigned tasks in accordance with agreed timetables.
- Ability to work independently, managing several activities at once, and to work under pressure to meet very short deadlines.

- Evidence of outstanding coordination and organizational skills.

Writing Skills (20 points)

Applicants must provide at least two writing samples with their application. The samples should be 350 to 1,500 words (preferably 750-1,500 words). They can be excerpts from larger articles or papers, and do not have to concern development or be written specifically for this solicitation. The samples should demonstrate the applicant's ability to clearly and lucidly communicate complex ideas to the public. The samples must be by the applicant, co-written articles are not accepted.

Education and Training (10 points)

- A Master's degree is preferred but not required, preferably in journalism, communications, international relations, international development, public administration, development/area studies, social studies or a related field. An undergraduate degree in similar disciplines with additional work experience.
- Training in one or more of the following areas: development outreach and communications, writing, journalism, web site content management, presentation skills, or other areas that are relevant to the detailed duties and responsibilities outlined in Section III of the solicitation.
- Extensive experience with Microsoft Word, Microsoft Power Point, and Microsoft Excel. Familiarity with Adobe Suite, particularly using Adobe Photoshop. Experience with Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, and RSS feeds.

Total Possible Points: 100

Past Performance/Professional Reference Checks

Applicants must provide at least three references with current contact information, preferably both an e-mail address and a telephone number. The Selection Committee will conduct reference checks of all applicants who meet the required minimum qualifications. The references will be asked to provide a general assessment of the applicant's suitability for the position. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure submitted references are available to provide a written or verbal reference in a timely manner.

In addition to comments from references, the Selection Committee will take into account awards or other evidence of outstanding performance in any areas related to the above selection criteria.

V. HOW TO APPLY

All applications packages are to be submitted to:

Sylvester Browne

Deputy Executive Specialist

USAID/Liberia

Email: sbrowne@usaid.gov and monrovia-hr@usaid.gov

Please cite the solicitation number and position title within the subject line of your email application. Any attachments provided via email shall be Microsoft Word or PDF and should not be zipped. Note that attachments to email must not exceed 3 MB.

A. Please send a completed and signed Optional Form 612 and curriculum vitae containing the following information. Optional Form OF 612 is available at the following website: <http://federaljobs.net/forms.htm>

- 1. Personal Information:** Full name, mailing address (with Zip Code) day and evening phone numbers, social security number, country of citizenship, highest federal civilian grade held (also give job series and dates held);
- 2. Education:** high school name, city and State (Zip code if known) date of diploma or GED; colleges and universities, name city and State (Zip code if known, majors, type and year of any degrees received;
- 3. Work Experience:** give the following information for your paid and non-paid work experience related to the job for which you are applying (do not send job descriptions); job title (include series and grade if Federal job), duties, and accomplishments, employers name and address, supervisor's name and phone number, starting and ending dates (month and year), hours per week, salary. Indicate if we may contact your current supervisor;
- 4. Other Qualifications:** job-related training courses (title and year), job related skills; for example, other languages, computer software /hardware, tools, machinery, typing speed, job related certificates (current only), job-related honors, awards, and special accomplishments, for examples, publications, memberships in professional or honor societies, leadership, activities, public speaking, and performance awards (give dates but do not send documents unless requested).

B. Application package must include all of the following:

- 1.** A cover letter of no more than 3 pages that demonstrates how the candidate's qualifications meet the work requirements;
- 2.** A curriculum vitae which, at a minimum, describes education, latest experience and career achievements;

3. A completed and signed OF-612, please send signed and scanned copy if applying by e-mail;
4. A relevant writing sample, minimum of two pages and maximum of ten pages;
5. Names, current and accurate contact numbers (e-mail and phone) of three professional references that have knowledge of the applicant's abilities to perform the duties set forth in the solicitation;
6. A written statement certifying the date and length of time for which the candidate is available for the position;

All of the above information must be included in the application package in order for the package to be considered complete.

VI. CLOSING DATE

Applications must be submitted no later than **August 17, 2014, 4:00 pm Local Time.**

ATTACHMENT 2: PSC Contractor Benefits (As allowable under applicable regulations)

As a matter of policy, and as appropriate, an off-shore US/TCN PSC may authorized the following benefits (Note: an individual defined as a Resident Hire employee may only be eligible for those benefits listed under item 1. below):

1. BENEFITS

- a. Employee's FICA Contribution
- b. Contribution toward Health & Life Insurance
- c. Pay Comparability Adjustment
- d. Annual Increase
- e. Eligibility for Worker's Compensation
- f. Annual & Sick Leave

2. ALLOWANCES (if applicable) *

- a. Temporary Lodging Allowance (Section 120)
- b. Housing (Section 130)
- c. Post Allowance (Section 220)
- d. Supplemental Post Allowance (Section 230)
- e. Separate Maintenance Allowance (Section 260)
- f. Education Allowance (Section 270)
- g. Education Travel (Section 280)
- h. Post Differential (Chapter 500)
- i. Payments during Evacuation/Authorized departure (Section 600), and
- j. Danger Pay (Section 650)

LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS FOR US/TCN PSCs

- 1. Form OF-612
- 2. Physical Examination (Form DS-1843 and DS-1622)
- 3. Questionnaire for Sensitive Positions (for National Security) (SF-86), or
- 4. Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions (SF-85)
- 5. Finger Print Card (FD-258)

NOTE: The forms listed 2 through 5 shall only be completed upon the advice of the Contracting Officer that an applicant is the successful candidate for the job.